

Minutes of Bures Hamlet Parish Council Meeting
Monday, 30th September 2024
held at Bures Community Centre at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs S Keeble-Fox, S Manning, K McAndrew, M Welch, J Chambers, J Aries (BSMPC Chair/Transition Group), Cllr D Holland (BDC)

In the Chair: Cllr S Keeble-Fox

Also present: J Wright (Clerk) and one member of the public

01/09/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Elder and Cllr Shackell (both on holiday). Apologies accepted by those members present. Apologies also received from Cllr Schwier (ECC).

02/09/24 DECLARATION/REGISTER OF INTERESTS/DISPENSATIONS

To receive any 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary' interests and dispensation requests. No interests declared and no dispensation requests put forward.

03/09/24 MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 15th July 2024 (previously circulated) were duly approved and signed as a correct record.

04/09/24 PUBLIC FORUM

15 minutes maximum public participation

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by Chairman

One member of the public present.

Presentation from Laura Atkinson – Senior Rural Housing Enabler:

Laura's role is to help small communities to deliver rural exception sites. The Bures 2022 Housing Needs survey established a need for local affordable housing. Laura explained the various types of housing – affordable rent, social rent, affordable part shared ownership, Trusts such as Almshouses. S106 agreements may be attached to a rural exception site application. Clerk to forward Laura the original S106 agreement held with Blackwater Housing now acting under Clarion Housing. Two sites have been put forward under the BDC Call for Sites for Bures Hamlet. Laura to study the two suggested sites and the parish council to follow up with Laura if appropriate.

County Councillor: Cllr Schwier not in attendance to present a report. However, all correspondence between meetings from Cllr Schwier have been circulated.

District Councillor: Cllr David Holland presented his report to the meeting. He noted on Local Development Orders which can govern what type of housing is developed on a site. He offered to investigate Trust options. Cllr Holland referred to the Call for Sites process and noted that BDC will not allocate a site with less than 10 dwellings. He confirmed he has written to BDC for an update on the Water Meadow sales and has submitted a complaint to officers regarding their inaction to the Article 4 Direction request on the land.

Bures St Mary Parish Council: Cllr Aries reported on the following: Draft minutes of the meeting held on 19th September have been circulated. Meeting snippets page submitted for the parish magazine. Currently In the process of delivering a Clerk's appraisal. Audit completed. Internal audit review to be held in October. Parking issues being followed up. Cllr Sue Jones elected on to the parish council. One vacancy still remains. Nella Probert has asked for volunteers to help deliver poppies on behalf of the Royal British Legion.

05/09/24 POLICE MATTERS

a) Issues raised with Community Policing Teams: The issues with ASB has abated this year. Some thefts from sheds reported. No other matters raised.

b) Essex Crime Commissioners Community Safety Fund: £300,000 available for communities in Essex to support local initiatives that prevent and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. Initiatives to be forwarded to the Clerk for follow up.

c) SpeedWatch: Essex Police Officers have joined Cllr Aries on patrol. This is a new police initiative and Cllr Aries has on a few occasions also been joined by the local PCSOs. Team extremely short of volunteers. Information from SpeedWatch data gives very good data evidence for speeding.

06/09/24 HIGHWAY MATTERS

Members noted that all LHP applications must be completed via a new online submission scheme.

a) Colchester Road speed calming:

- 1) A traffic survey has been undertaken at Colchester Road with results showing good compliance to the 30mph speed limit.
- 2) Following the results of the speed survey members agreed that a LHP request for 30mph indicator signs along Colchester Road verges would not be feasible.
- 3) Members agreed there remained a need to progress a LHP request to ECC for a safer crossing point. Chair and Clerk to follow up and item to remain on the agenda.

b) Water Lane pedestrian safety: A TRO for double yellow lines at the junction and a single yellow line along Secretaries boundary wall had been rejected by residents and subsequently by Parking Partnership. It was unanimously agreed to survey all residents again for a double yellow line at the junction only. Chair and Clerk to follow up.

c) Water Lane flooding issues: Cllr Keeble-Fox, Cllr Welch and the Clerk had met on site with a Highways Engineer resulting in a very positive outcome. Nearby landowners agreed to clear their ditches of vegetation. The Engineer fully accepted that the brook needed clearing of debris and would follow up on ECC funding for the clearance. The Environment Agency to monitor any work undertaken.

d) Bridge Street pedestrian safety: Several safety measures have been put in place over a number of years. However residents remain concerned and requested the parish council to revisit traffic calming for the village. However the recent traffic survey undertaken did not indicate a problem with speed. Parking signs being put in place for market days may hopefully ease some congestion. Cllr Aries is currently monitoring HGV's travelling the B1508 through Bures.

e) Fairer charges at Bures Station: Cllr Welch had noticed fairer parking tariffs being charged at other stations. He considered that a more varied tariff for Bures may encourage greater usage. Members agreed he should prepare a letter for submitting to Greater Anglia.

f) Parsonage Hill parking: Members unsure whether this remains an issue. Will continue to be monitored.

g) 30mph extension Lamarsh Hill: The LHP request remains at Validation stage. A vote was taken as to whether the LHP should remain in the system. 4 votes in favour and 1 vote against. Cllr Holland advised that LHP requests for small projects are to be separated from the many larger projects submitted to hopefully quicken the system.

h) Middleton Road to Lamarsh Hill: Members remain in support of Cllr Holland's proposals for a 40mph speed limit along the Henny Road which is predominantly subject to a 60mph limit. The proposals have been submitted as a Local Highway Panel request to ECC.

i) Millennium footpath: FP32 is an established Right of Way on the Essex Definitive Map leading from Colchester Road entrance gate to the Millennium bridge. During heavy rains the footpath becomes impassable. Members agreed it would be a costly project to raise the path bed and agreed the Clerk should remove this item from the agenda.

j) Bridge Street resurfacing: Works scheduled for December.

k) Station Hill tree root: Cllr Schwier advised that there were currently no works in the system for the pavement repair.. However he has requested an Inspector to visit the site to assess the root growth. Nothing further to report.

07/09/24 PLANNING

a) All applications received and comments made to date as per attached list.

b) Applications requiring consideration at this meeting:

24/02002/TPO No. 8 Maltings Close – Parish Tree Warden to visit the site and offer his comments. 24/01975/FUL Pine View, Lamarsh Hill – no objection in principle however agreed to ask for planning conditions to be applied as follows: Work to be completed within the next 3 years with no further extension of time. No burning on site. Site working hours. A habitat and biodiversity statement.

c) Colchester Road land sales: See Cllr Holland's report Agenda item 4. Two illegal accesses created off the Colchester Road. Signs have been damaged – reported Ref 2939426. Land under a BDC Enforcement Case.

d) Jubilee Grove:

1) Update: Cllr Aries reported that the benches were now installed and the sign for the entrance to the grove is in hand. Grants to be applied for to install pathways suitable for the disabled.

2) Open Spaces Fund: Cllr Keeble-Fox has applied for a grant to install hedgehog houses plus plants to encourage butterflies and bees. She is also gaining advice from Emma Black of the Stour Valley project team to encourage volunteers to join the initiative.

e) Ferriers Farm Barns: Site owners are looking at commercial use for the barns. No further update.

f) Chambers Bus Depot site: Second remediation strategy submitted and approved. Amended plans submitted to Babergh showing the external installation of ASHPs (air source heat pumps) to the dwellings.

g) BDC Local Plan Review: The parish council has submitted its comments to the Call for Sites supporting in principle the two sites submitted for Bures Hamlet. Sites submitted being BURE2070 Land at Old Barn Road and BURE2071 Land adjoining Woolpit Downs. A revised timetable outlining a further round of public consultations scheduled for early January.

h) Colchester City Council Plan Review: Mount Bures PC are seeking to designate the small grass area currently housing its village sign as a Local Green Space. They have contacted Colchester City Council and members suggested MBPC should also submit a comment to the Bures NHP consultation as well.

i) National Grid Bramford to Twinstead: The Secretary of State has approved National Grid's application to reinforce the electricity transmission network between Bramford substation in Suffolk to Twinstead Tee in Essex. Pre-construction survey work has begun with wider construction activity beginning in early 2025 and planned to be delivered by 2027.

08/09/24 JOINT NHP AND JOINT PARISH PLAN 2024-25

- a) Joint NHP:** Both District Councils have reviewed the plan and it is now out for statutory public consultation. Consultation forms had been delivered to all residents for their comments.
- b) The Steering Group minutes of 14th August 2024** accepted by all members.
- c) Joint Parish Plan 2024-25:** A draft of the plan circulated prior to the meeting. Any further suggested actions for inclusion to be forwarded to Cllr Aries as soon as possible as the plan is to be agreed at the November meetings of both parish councils. Joint parish council magazine – discussions in hand as to whether the parish councils would amalgamate a magazine with St Mary PCC or amalgamate with adjoining parishes. Website/Facebook page improvements in hand. Both parish councils to write its own snippet page for publication in the parish magazine following each meeting. Clerk to follow up with the Chair.

At this point the Chair requested the meeting to continue after the 2 hours as per Parish Council Standing Orders. All members present agreed.

9/09/24 AUDIT MATTERS

- a) External Auditors report for 2023/24 Accounting Statement** received with one matter arising. This has been noted for the 2024/25 audit and the Financial Regulations duly amended.
- b) Members accepted BB Business Associates Letter of Engagement** for the 2024/25 internal audit. Clerk to duly sign and return.
- c) Internal Audit Review** scheduled for Monday 7th October at 6pm via Zoom – Clerk, Cllr Welch and Cllr Keeble-Fox to attend.
- d) The Clerk has investigated the External Auditor's note to Assertion 3** stating every authority should have an email account that belongs to the council and to which the council has access, this ideally would be a .gov.uk or .org.uk address or an address linked to the council website. Owing to the high costs involved it was agreed to put the matter on hold until it became a compulsory action.

10/09/24 FINANCE MATTERS

Business Instant A/C balance: £25,552.59 Treasurers Account balance: £2,479.04

- a) Finance and Budget monitoring report** - noted, circulated and attached.
- b) Bank reconciliation and verifying bank statements dated 18th September 2024** noted, circulated and duly signed by the Chairman and non-signatory member.
- c) The Clerk had obtained the relevant information on Utility Aid Services** with an aim to improve the electricity provider for the parish council. It was agreed Utility Aid should do a market search for renewable energy options. Clerk to follow up.
- d) Clerk had liaised with Lloyds Bank** regarding changes in regulations for business accounts. It has been established that the letter received may have been misleading and a small local authority was not on the exclusion list. Letter advising of changes to the savings account noted.
- e) It was agreed to contribute £25 to the Braintree District Neighbourhood Watch Group.**
- f) It was agreed to pay the second half year precepts for Sportsground and Cemetery.** £4,000 and £2,750 respectively.

11/09/24 POLICIES FOR REVIEW

The following policies were duly reviewed:

Biodiversity, Environment, Training, Recording at Meetings, Use of Social Media, Donations and Grants and the Privacy Notice.

12/09/24 CLERK'S REPORT PLUS ANY CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR ACTION

This had been previously circulated (attached and published on website).

The following correspondence was discussed and action taken as required.

Bag dispensers: Cllr Chambers to fill the dispensers.

Retailers trading: Members agreed there were sufficient retailers trading at the Essex Knowle. The Saturday fish n chip van to be asked to remain at the Nayland Road carpark.

Boundary verge Colchester Road: This matter was now resolved as the hedge has been cut back and the signage visible.

Donation of a boat: A small sailing dinghy has been offered to the parish council as a planted display stand. The offer was happily accepted by all members. The dinghy would stand on the grass verge past the Normandie Way turning. Clerk to arrange siting and planting.

Bleed Kits: Bleed kits have been offered to the village by the Daniel Baird Foundation. The parish council suggested 3 kits, one for the station, one for the sportsground and one for Church Square. The kits would be supplied free however there would be a charge to house and install them. Clerk to follow up with Cllr Schwier.

13/09/24 REPORTS - All reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors acknowledged receipt and were able to present questions by exception.

Asset Report: Cllr Welch had circulated his report prior to the meeting. Bus shelters needed cleaning down. One bench along riverbank needed a clean. Bridge Street lifebelt ropes tangled. Lamp along The Paddocks footpath to be cleared of vegetation. Noticeboard to be revarnished. Bag dispenser along Millennium footpath needs refilling. Clerk to follow up on items raised.

Cemetery Authority: Draft minutes of the meeting of 17th June 2024 circulated, published on the parish council website and available to view online. Draft minutes of the 9th September 2024. still to be circulated.

Sportsground Committee: The draft minutes of the 12th September 2024 circulated, published on the parish council website and available to view online. Next meeting 14th November 2024.

Community Centre: Minutes circulated from last meeting to members.

Rights of Way: Cllr Keeble-Fox had circulated her report to members. This has been published on the parish council website and available to view online.

Primary School: Cllr Fairbairn had circulated an update for members and this has been published on the parish council website and available to view online.

Station Adopters: Mary Turner, Lead Station Adopter had circulated her report on behalf of Bures Station Adopters and this has been published on the parish council website and available to view online.

Transport: Cllr Welch had circulated his report to all members prior to the meeting. He noted on the ceasing of the DaRT 3 service with Arrow Taxis. The contract has since been awarded to Flagfinders/Central Connect. Updated advertising in hand.

Tree Warden: The following tree applications still awaiting comment from the Tree Warden – No. 8 Maltings Close 24/02002/TPO and No. 34 Water Lane 24/01913/TPOCON. The Tree Warden has no objections to Land South of Boat House 24/01810/TPOCON as these works had been requested by nearby residents.

Bures Common Land Trust: Cllr Jackson had circulated her report on behalf of BCLT to all members prior to the meeting.

14/09/24 INFORMATION EXCHANGE/NEXT AGENDA ITEMS

Cllr Holland to contact BDC regarding the possible sale of the railway crossing house at Mount Bures as it now stands empty.

15/09/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 18th November to be held at the Garrad Room, Bures Community Centre at 7.30pm.

Future dates agreed 2025: Monday 20th January, 17th March, APM 24th March, AGM 19th May

The meeting closed at 9.52pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date